



ASSISTANT
DIRECTOR

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY
BUREAU OF ALCOHOL, TOBACCO AND FIREARMS
WASHINGTON, DC 20226

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OPEN LETTER
TO ALL DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA FEDERAL FIREARMS LICENSEES
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA FIREARMS REGISTRATION CERTIFICATES
ARE NO LONGER A VALID ALTERNATIVE TO NICS CHECKS

The purpose of this letter is to advise you of your responsibilities under the permanent provisions of the Brady Law, 18 U.S.C. § 922(t). The permanent provisions of the Brady Law took effect on November 30, 1998. The Brady Law generally requires Federal firearms licensees (FFLs) to initiate a National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) check before transferring a firearm to an unlicensed individual. However, the Brady Law contains a few exceptions to the NICS check requirement, including an exception for holders of certain State permits to possess, carry, or acquire firearms.

In a 1998 open letter, ATF advised you that firearms registration certificates issued within the District of Columbia prior to November 30, 1998, would be "grandfathered" as Brady alternatives for the duration of the certificate, not to exceed five years from the date of issuance. The letter also stated that firearms registration certificates issued on or after November 30, 1998, would **NOT** qualify as alternatives to the NICS check.

District of Columbia law does not provide a set time period for the expiration of firearm registration certificates. However, because Federal law provides that qualifying permits must have been issued within the past five years, as of November 30, 2003, District of Columbia FFLs may no longer accept a firearms registration certificate as an alternative to a NICS check. If you have any questions, please contact your local ATF office.

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(Firearms, Explosives and Arson)